

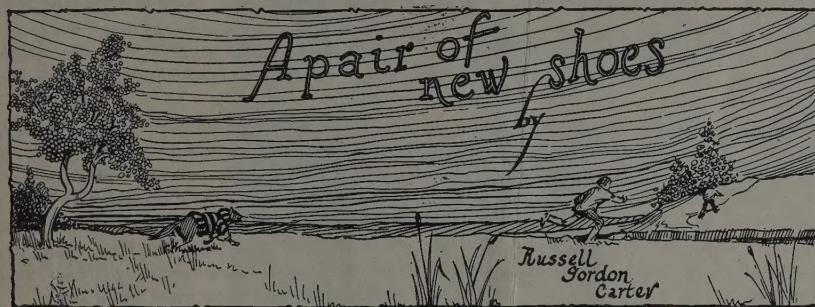
THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

VOLUME XVIII. No. 24

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Part II

THE men continued to dispute over who should make the coffee, then over other matters of a similar sort. And gradually Howard began to feel a little more at his ease. Nevertheless he was scared. Here he was at the bottom of an old ice house in wild, unfrequented country, and two men, who at best were tramps, were preparing to eat a meal, perhaps spend the night, in front of his only means of exit. What would happen if they should discover him? He clenched his teeth hard to keep them from chattering; he could not bear the thought of remaining much longer in that cold, damp place.

At last he knelt down and threw his arm round the wet shivering body of the dog. He wished that Rex were an older and less friendly dog; there was so much of the puppy still in him that he wanted to play with every one. Of what use could a dog like that be to him in such a fix?

"Don't like it much here," he heard one of the men say. "Too wet-like an' spooky."

The other growled something in reply; then both were silent.

Presently Howard heard the hiss and crackle of burning grass and twigs; he then caught the odor of acrid smoke. A dull red glow marked the outline of the door, causing faint, grotesque shadows to flit ghostlike among the high rafters. He decided to find out just how close to the ice house they had built their fire. He started up the slope, but the mud was too slippery even for crawling.

Gone now were all thoughts for his

new shoes. He groped about at the bottom until he found a number of sticks, lodged there perhaps by high water. At last he had half a dozen stout pieces of varying lengths. He began again to mount the slope, plunging the sticks into the mud before him as he went, and using them as braces for hands and feet. The dog tried to follow, and being unable to do so, set up a melancholy howling.

At the end of perhaps five minutes Howard reached the top of the slope. Clinging to the side of the aperture, he peered cautiously forth and saw to his dismay that the fire was burning only a few feet from the house, directly beneath the opening. The two men were at some distance to the right, gathering wood. He could see them against a full moon that was rising out of the wastelands, casting a silver sheen over the waving tops of the grasses.

For an instant Howard was tempted to leap forth and run for the boat. He started to climb out, but the piteous howling of the dog made him hesitate. No, he couldn't leave Rex there alone! He frowned and gazed thoughtfully at the fire below him; on the coals stood a can of water, evidently for the much-discussed coffee, and beside the fire lay an old raincoat and a felt hat.

Suddenly his chattering teeth came together with a click. "It's worth a try!" he said to himself. "They're prob'ly both cowards! Anyway they think the place is spooky. I'll give 'em proof of it!"

He leaned far out and, lifting the can from the fire, drew it inside and propped it against the woodwork. Then with the aid of one of the sticks he fished for the

hat and the coat, finally drawing them both inside. Having done that, he paused to consider. He tried to put himself in the place of the men. Supposing he himself had set a can of water on a fire and thrown his hat and coat near by on the ground, feeling confident that no one else was within a mile of him; and supposing after a few minutes' absence he had returned to find them missing — what would he think? Howard was not quite sure what he would think, but he felt confident that the fellow who had complained about the place being "too spooky" would be more positive of it when he returned!

Howard smiled at the thought. He wished he had something white with which to carry the illusion of spooks still farther. And then, a few moments later, inspiration came to him out of the dim past when, together with other small boys, he had watched one of the boatmen along the canal turn his coat inside out and put it on his black woolly dog. Howard had something better than a coat; he had his black and white sweater.

He climbed down again to the bottom of the ice house. Rex at once ceased his barking. Howard looped the dog's rope round his wrist and started up the slope, fairly dragging Rex after him. On the ledge at the top he peered forth and saw the men approaching, each carrying a double armful of wood. Working with all possible speed, he removed his sweater and put it on the dog, thrusting the forelegs through the sleeves and pulling the collar up so that it covered all of the head except the nose and eyes. When he had fastened the last button underneath, he held the dog tight and waited.

The tramps were only a dozen yards off now; Howard watched them with quickening pulse as they drew nearer. One was short and wore a cap; the other was tall and bareheaded. Howard drew back a little, and his fingers trembled as they closed gently round the dog's muzzle. A few feet from the fire the short man bent over to deposit his load of wood, but with a gasp he straightened abruptly, and the wood tumbled in dribs and drabs round his feet.

"The can's gone!" he said thickly.

With that the other's load slipped from his fingers and clattered to the ground. He was staring at the place where he had left his hat and coat. Howard thought he saw the fellow's lips move, but he heard no sound. For perhaps ten seconds the two stood there, speechless, staring at the fire and the ground about it. Then they looked at each other. A bat fluttered overhead, swooped toward the fire and darted away into the blackness. A burning ember cracked, and both men stepped quickly backward.

"I ain't goin' to stay here," said the shorter of the two.

He turned and started to stride along the trail, glancing back frequently over his shoulder. The other hesitated; then he too turned and started up the trail, quickening his pace with each stride.

Howard decided to remain quiet until they were gone, and not use his "spook" after all; but he had not counted on Rex. The sight of the two men hurrying away roused latent instincts in the dog. With a yelp and a wiggle he was out of Howard's arms and on the ground, racing up the trail — a bounding, leaping, yelping black-and-white phantom.

Howard was too much excited to appreciate the humor of it at the time, but afterward he chuckled whenever he pictured the scene — the two men running at top speed along the trail in the moonlight, then quartering off through the tall grass to the river bank, the unearthly-looking collie bounding after them in a most disconcerting and ludicrous way.

Howard sprang to the ground; a few moments later he heard two loud splashes in the water and saw a succession of

ripples turn to silver. He ran along the trail, and presently he came upon Rex. The dog had run into a mass of brambles and was unable to extricate himself. While Howard was disengaging the sweater from the vines he had a glimpse of the two figures on the opposite bank. They were running.

At the end of five minutes he had the dog in the boat. He removed the sweater from him and then applied himself vigorously to the oars. He felt a sense of exultant triumph, tempered only by one distressing thought: the shoes that he had boasted he would keep looking as good as new for a year were ruined!

It was after ten o'clock when Howard reached home. Mrs. Greenlaw was at a neighbor's house, but his father was in the living room. He gave an exclamation of surprise at sight of his son — his mud-covered feet and legs, his ragged sweater, his dirt-stained face and hands.

"Howard!" he gasped. "What in the world —"

"It's all right, Dad!" was the grinning reply. "I found Rex for you, but his feet are 'most as muddy as mine, so I left him in the shed."

Then he told his father the whole story.

"My boy," said Mr. Greenlaw at the end, "you did a daring thing, and I must say I'm proud of you!"

"But, Dad!" protested the boy. "Look at my shoes!"

"Never mind," was the reply. "There are lots more shoes in the world, but very few dogs like Rex!" He suddenly smiled and added, "I take back what I said about you looking like a peacock. You don't. You look more like a mud turtle! Now go upstairs and get into the tub before your mother comes home!"

track of Magellan, then. So, at last she discovered that what Magellan called Patagonia — a country at the very tip end of South America — is truly "The Land of Giants." Wasn't that worth all the research work she had been doing?

When Magellan happened upon this country, Nan learned, the first thing he noticed was the great footprints — "patagones," he called them. Patagone is Portuguese for footprint. And wherever Magellan and his men went along the shore, there were "patagones," due to the huge feet of the natives who walked about here. So Magellan called this country Patagonia, which means "The Land of Giants." And the people Magellan and his men found here were, indeed, a race of giants. None of them was under six and one-half feet in height.

There were no horses in the country, and the giants hunted and traveled on foot. The flesh of the Patagonian ostrich was what they subsisted on. And when you think that these giants must outrun this swift-footed bird, you get some idea of how active of foot and nimble of limb they must have been.

Magellan's men told wonderful stories about "The Land of Giants" when they got back to Spain. Magellan himself never returned. His ships went all the way around the world. But Magellan got only two-thirds of the way.

From "The Land of Giants" Magellan sailed into the straits which are named for him. Then he sailed out on to an ocean which he named "Pacific." He kept on until he came to the Philippine Islands. Here the explorers were attacked by the natives, and during the encounter Magellan was killed.

"The Land of Giants," however, soon began to be talked about. Other explorers went there. Before long, horses were brought to "The Land of Giants" from Buenos Aires, and the giants soon learned to ride and hunt on horseback.

Since Magellan happened upon this country remarkable changes have taken place. But the Patagonians are still large enough to be called a race of giants. And this country means "The Land of Giants," as it did when Magellan called it "Patagonia."

It is up to You!

You who are young, it is you, it is you
Who must make the dreams of the world
come true.

You who are young have a world to
build,
The future shall be what you have
willed. . . .

Heed what you build, with hand and
tongue,
You who are young, you who are young!
MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.

How Nan Discovered the Land of Giants

By Greta Bryar

NAN GARDNER had a bit of the explorer in her. It has been said that every bright girl and boy are born explorers. And our method of studying geography is admirably well adapted to the development of this "bit of the explorer." So when Nan's next geographical assignment required her setting out to discover "The Land of Giants," she was delighted with the undertaking. And she was, too, somewhat perplexed.

"The Land of Giants!" murmured Nan. "However am I going to find out where it is?"

"What's bothering you, Sister?" called her brother Richard from the next room. "Thinking of exploring Patagonia?" She was speaking of giants. "Maybe you'd like to have been with Magellan when he landed there."

"You're teasing," accused Nan.

"Then let's know what the trouble is?" urged Richard, who was trying to make high school next term.

"I mustn't," said Nan. "I have to find out for myself."

"Go ahead!" said Richard. "I've got lots of things to find out for myself. But dad's library is great for that. He keeps right up to date, you know."

Her father's library! What would Richard and Nan do without it? And there was that wonderful work for home and school use! Of course Richard didn't know what he was talking about, when he mentioned Magellan. But explorers must have something in view when they set out on a voyage of discovery. Magellan, she knew, was a Portuguese navigator, who, about twenty-five years after Columbus discovered America, set out from Spain upon a voyage around the world. She would better keep on the

The Flicker

By Alvin M. Peterson

It usually is late in March when I hear a loud "cut-cut-cut-cut-cut" in the distance. Then I know that the flicker is back again after spending the winter months a little farther to the south. The notes of this bird are so loud, have such carrying power and are so unlike the notes of any other birds that they at once identify him. They could not possibly be the notes of any other than a large, sturdy, hardy bird. I know that if I walk slowly in the direction from which the notes come I soon shall hear them again. On I walk, the notes eventually guiding me to some grove or woodland, where I discover the bird responsible for them.

The bird is a large brownish bird over a foot long. He is usually to be found clinging to or hopping up the trunk of a tree in true woodpecker fashion. The flicker is one of our most handsome and widely distributed woodpeckers. He has a bright-red patch on the back of his head. His tail feathers are stiff and pointed and serve him admirably as braces, when clinging to or hopping up the trunks of trees. I advance towards the tree trunk to which he is clinging, when with a soft purring note or two the bird flies on to another tree. I note that when flying he seems to bound along in graceful undulating flight. First he dips toward the ground, then he rises in a smooth long curve; then he dips downward again, and so on. I notice, too, that he has a large white patch low down on his back, just back of the base of his tail.

When the flicker is seen from the front, it is found to have a large black crescent on its breast. Its wings and tail are lined with golden-yellow. The golden-yellow lining of its wings has caused it to be given the name "golden-winged woodpecker."

The flicker nests early in May. It either finds a tree with a suitable natural cavity in it, or it drills a hole in the trunk or branch of one. In other words, the flicker is a feathered carpenter that makes its summer home in a tree, post or stub. It hammers away at the wood of a tree or stub, scattering chips in every

direction. The hollow when completed is deep and pear-shaped. The bird does not build a nest in the hole, though the eggs may be laid on a few chips scattered over its bottom. Flickers often nest in holes far from the ground. This habit has caused them to be named "high-holes." But in spite of this name, many flickers nest near the ground, the nest-



Photograph by Author

A handsome young Flicker

ing hole often being but four or five feet from the base of a tree or stub.

The eggs of the flicker are pure-white in color, and from five to ten of them are laid in each nest. It has been found that if the fresh eggs of a flicker are removed from its nest the mother bird will sometimes keep on laying until a score or more eggs are laid, just as a domestic hen continues laying for a long time because her eggs are gathered each day.

The flicker, because of the golden-yellow lining of its wings, is sometimes known as the yellow-hammer. One of its most common notes sounds like "elape," and consequently the bird also is known as the elape. The flicker is a much-named woodpecker, for in all it is known by something like seventy different names. But by whatever name it is known, it makes an excellent bird neighbor. It not only is very handsome and interesting but it also is one of our most useful birds.

In the City

By MARGARET STUART URANN

I walk through narrow city streets
And climb dark flights of stair
With never a glimpse of the sordidness
That I know is always there;

For I carry Beauty with me
To every place I go —
It makes life glorious for me
Because I love it so.

Day Dreaming

By S. PARKES CADMAN, D.D., LL.D.
*President of the Federal Council of the
Churches of Christ in America*

The poet who wrote that the thoughts of a boy are long, long thoughts was thinking of the vision-making power possessed by all boys and girls. This is the practice of day dreaming in which we all indulge. It needs to be encouraged and directed, for it has inspired some of the finest results which youngsters have achieved.

When Warren Hastings was seven years of age he learned from his widowed mother that Daylesford Manor had once belonged to their family, whereupon he at once began to dream how the ancestral estate might be regained.

He lived with this dream for thirty years and it influenced his whole career. It led him to India, where he rendered valiant service to the British Empire and was the first Governor General of that great country. On his return to England he was able to purchase Daylesford Manor, and there he spent the last twenty-four years of his notable career.

It is this same power of day dreaming, followed up by vigorous action, that largely explains the greatness achieved by men and women in every walk of life. The influences of early day dreams pursue us for better or worse. They are purified and enriched by our education in home, school and church. They may be spoiled and weakened by evil associations which always corrupt good morals and good manners.

* * *

In your day dreaming always remember the many benefits you enjoy in this land.

Be diligent in using its opportunities to prepare yourself for what the coming years have in store for you.

Be useful and helpful to your own folks and to your friends on every possible occasion.

Be good-natured and courteous in all your behavior.

Remember that what you dream today holds the promise of what you will be and do tomorrow.

I Know

By JOSEPHINE BOUTON BLEECKER

"It is raining. It is windy. It's a horrid old day."
At least, it really seems to be, for that's what people say.
The rain comes down in torrents and the wind blows all about.
I have to stay indoors today, — Marie won't let me out.
But I have seen a crocus and, I think, a bluebird's wing —
So I know that winter's over and next month is Spring!

THE BEACON CLUB

The Editor's Post Box

6242 WATERMAN AVE.,
ST. LOUIS, MO.

Dear Editor: I am a member of the Sunday school of the Church of the Unity, in St. Louis. We all enjoy *The Beacon* very much; many of our members follow your stories very closely and others are fond of the puzzles.

I was chosen to write this letter to let you know that you have some loyal supporters and readers in St. Louis, and that we are interested in the Beacon Club. I am sure that there are more children who wish to join the Club and who will write to you soon.

Yours truly,
CHARLES DE PEW, Jr.

TEMPLETON, MASS.

Dear Editor: I get *The Beacon* every Sunday and like it very much. I should like to become a member of the Beacon Club.

Miss Mary Baker is our Sunday-school superintendent.

I belong to the Y. P. R. U. and I go to school every day. I am ten years old and in the fifth grade. I should like to have some one of my age correspond with me.

Yours truly,
RUTH RICH.

35 HIGH ST.,
PETERBORO, N. H.

Dear Editor: I am a member of the Unitarian Church School of Peterboro. We have *The Beacon* every Sunday. I enjoy reading the stories in it. I should like very much to join the Beacon Club and wear a badge.

My Sunday-school teacher's name is Miss Brown. She is very nice to us.

Yours very truly,
HAZEL BARRETT.

TEMPLETON, MASS.

Dear Editor: I like very much to read the letters in *The Beacon*. Also I enjoyed reading the story about "The Walking House." I should like to become a member of the Beacon Club. Our minister is Rev. Richard A. Day; he is also our assistant Sunday-school superintendent.

I am fourteen years old and belong to the Y. P. R. U. I should like some one to write to me.

Yours very truly,
MILDRED BOURN.

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.
OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.
OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

Our Young Contributors

A Dream

By ESTHER L. HUTCHINSON (AGE 14)
Oh, far away in a land unknown,
Where clouds with a sultry wind are
blown,

I wandered at close of a weary day
To seek relief in some dreamy way.

On a fleecy white cloud I lay me down
To watch the sea-gulls sweeping along
And hear below the song of the sea
Through the quiet air and over the lea.

Soon my cloud a castle did pass
In which there dwelt a fair young lass,
With golden hair that streamed to the
ground,—

Such beauty could nowhere else be found.

All of a sudden my cloud passed this
And my joyous soul this sight did miss;
Then clearly I heard a sweet voice say,
"Why, daughter dear, 'tis another day!"

TAUNTON, MASS.

Book Notes

BY ELSIE LUSTIG

Although Christmas is now long past, I know that a great many of you younger boys and girls will enjoy reading KRIS AND KRISTINA, by Marie Bruce, with bright illustrations by James Daugherty (Doubleday). Kris was very happy getting ready for Christmas and all — and yet — and yet he was a little lonely too. (Kris, as you know, is Santa Claus.) Then Kristina came to make him happy, and she helped him to plan all sorts of new toys and gifts for rich and poor boys and girls. He knew a thrilling secret which he would not tell Kristina; she had to guess it for herself, and then he took her on a thrilling Christmas Eve ride all over the world. Oh, and you will love the part where Kris and Kristina have to move into a home far, far away. What fun the reindeer had! And how glad the trees in the Magic Forest were to see them! And the magic sack. . . . But I'll not spoil your fun. Try to read this book yourselves. It is very short and, oh, just the kind of story that you will enjoy.

Puzzlers

Enigma

I am composed of 24 letters and am the name of a famous man.

My 5, 3, 4, 1, 24 is a tree.
My 8, 9, 23, 10, 14, 7, 13 is a month.
My 12, 2, 11, 13 is to close.
My 20, 17, 22, 19 is a lover of the open air.

My 16, 17, 18, 21, 15 are rows of words.

My 2, 6 is a pronoun referring to my whole. J. A. C.

Unlabelled Cans

One can is open, honest, fair;
Another sweetly sings;
One lights you as you go to bed;
And one in the garden springs.

In one is story quite absurd;
And one's a vile French dance.
One is an office-seeker; one
A musical romance.

This is a covering above
A throne or bed; and one
The soldier carries on the march;
While one's his greatest gun.

Here's one that's shrewd;
and that sweet one
Will win a childish heart;
This one's a waterway; and that
May rightly make us smart.

—*The Wellspring.*

Answers to Puzzles in No. 22

Enigma.—Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth.

Twisted Names of States.—1. Vermont.
2. Florida. 3. Texas. 4. Maine. 5. Georgia.
6. Alabama. 7. Connecticut. 8. Kansas.
9. Nevada. 10. Arkansas.

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